

**Linda Clair**  
**Seven-day Meditation Retreat**  
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**Transcription from Audio Recordings**

**File 3b – Monday morning discussion**

Question: ... I guess that's a good moment to try not to get attached too. But I suppose the thing about that is it made me feel that's why I want to keep doing meditation all the time, because I want to not let the thoughts just get in the way of understanding, or of greater realisations.

Linda: Yes, and It becomes fascinating. It's shocking and amazing seeing how many thoughts there are and how it's very difficult to just sit without thinking, without judging.

Question: I found your counting really helpful, because I do that anyway but I think I was always using just longer numbers and the shorter did help. Sometimes I have a feeling it's almost like going under anaesthetic, where my mind is just hijacked and not there anymore. It's like I wake up sometime later and I realise that something else has taken me away, so I start the counting again. But it's almost like I don't have a choice – at that moment it just seems to be stolen away. Then eventually you come back to it.

Linda: Do you think you've been thinking or not, or you just don't know what's happened?

Question: I think I've been thinking. I think it just takes over somehow. But it's almost like going into a dream state. ☺

Linda: Well, it is and your whole life can go by, your whole life just in that dream! And suddenly something wakes you up, "What have I been doing?! What have I been doing for most of my life?" The mind is like an anaesthetic, it's like an anesthetising reality. Reality is very intense. It's very here and now, and just raw, and spontaneous. Thinking is just this floating, "Ahh, this would be nice. Oh, it would be nice over here," and, "Oh no, this is horrible." They're both as seductive. But it's all drama and the drama becomes quite boring after a while, you just don't want to keep going over the same thing again and again and again.

Question: Yes, it's very frustrating.

Linda: Yes. So this practice is giving you the power to be able to take a stand and go, "I'm not going to put up with this anymore. I don't want to put up with this anymore." And this *is* a way out, in my experience. Of course it's not easy, but you start to see it is possible. You get little glimpses where you see the thought and you can come back and for a while – it's amazing. Then the thinking will come back again, but you've realised and felt that – "This is possible in me, not just someone else talking about it saying enlightenment is this and that" – this is actually possible in me."

That is the beauty of this practice. It's not following anyone. It's taking a stand and becoming independent and strong and powerful. And that only comes from an absence of fear, and thinking is generated by fear, fed by fear.

Question: I think that's something that doing these long sits really helps with. During the course of a day you get so distracted you don't realise that fear's at the bottom of it. But sitting here again and again I become much more aware of the fear at the bottom of it all. Thanks very much.

Question: I've got a couple of questions but I'd just like to firstly thank you while I've got the opportunity. It took me a while to find a teacher that taught something that was aligned with what I'd been doing and you've helped me kind of clear that up and drop some of the nonsense that I'd gathered along the way, so thank you.

Linda: "Nonsense" is a good word! (laughing) There's so much nonsense around!

Question: Like esoteric mysticism, jabber-jabber stuff. (Linda laughs) The first question: I think yesterday or the day before you talked about a quickening that happens when you're able to bring your attention back to your breath. I was just wondering what you meant by that term?

Linda: A quickening? Your consciousness quickens so your intelligence starts to quicken when it's not so subject to being dragged down by the mind. Pure intelligence is very, very fast. What's happening here is that we're seeing that even though thinking might seem very fast, it's not. It hasn't got a hope when pure intelligence dominates, takes over. So bit by bit, every time you see that movement – and it's actually a very slow movement even though it feels fast relatively, relative to pure intelligence it's very slow – and come back to your body, you are speeding up to some degree. Your consciousness is becoming more pure, more intelligent, faster, vibrating at a faster level.

Thinking is based on time. It's really about creating time and using the theory that time exists, whereas in truth there is no time. So when you think you're creating this illusion that there is time. You're allowing yourself to be dragged into this very slow, cumbersome illusion called time, which is believing that there is a past, there is a future. But in between the past and the future there is now, where there is no past and no future, and that is reality. And that vibrates in a different dimension at an incredibly, incredibly fast rate.

Each time you come back to your body and you're in your body – for maybe only a millisecond – you're in that timeless space. That starts to quicken you – what's the word when it builds up – accumulates! So yes, it starts to accumulate and you start to quicken. You become faster in this realm where there's no time, which is reality, which is now. Does that answer your question at all?

Question: Yes, it does, thank you. So you're kind of attuned to a frequency of the dimension you're talking about? (Yes.) And that quickens your consciousness?

Linda: It's not this spacey dimension – it's now. It's real.

And it's why when you're around someone who's in this state, who is vibrating at that level, you start to pick up on it and you automatically start to resonate with that whether you know it or not. That becomes really quite attractive. It's not that you feel good – that's got nothing to do with it – but it starts to quicken you and you do feel something. You can feel buzzy, you can feel something happening, you can feel emotional sometimes because the energy in your body is starting to go faster and then hit blockages. And that happens when we're sitting as well.

Question: I wanted to ask you about that for the last few discussions but every time we get to the discussion I feel a pulsing in my hand and it turns into anxious nervousness – this kind of rush of energy. I don't know if it's the coffee. (laughter) Sometimes it's really nice but after a while it gets kind of unpleasant because it's a bit overbearing.

Linda: Yes.

Question: Or it might just be that I don't have to sit – the relief of getting out of the pain for a second, maybe.

Linda: The pain is also quickening you. The pain is forcing you to be here, and it's actually what I was just describing. The energy is quickening and starting to go faster and then hitting blockages of time – the past in your body – so you feel that as pain. It's actually a really valuable thing because the pain does force you to stay here and you need, to a degree, to be forced. You can be willingly forced and that's why you're here – you're actually willing. It sounds like a contradiction but that's what it is.

The pulsing that you feel is the energy, and it's why it's so important to stay grounded. I keep going on and on and on about it, and it's the basis of Zen practice: you're grounded. You have to be grounded because otherwise you just can't tolerate the amount of energy that comes through your body. The grounding helps to regulate it, and helps to sustain it and become more established in your body safely. Otherwise, if too much comes in too soon for whatever reason, it's a bit like when you've had too much coffee, you just can't cope with it. So it's the main reason that grounding is so important.

Question: If I'm getting this heightened from sitting, and it's kind of getting on top of me a little bit, which it has a few times, mostly in group things. Is there a way I can discharge that or ground it that isn't sitting, because it seems to be pushing it.

Linda: When you're not actually sitting?

Question: Or maybe I just need to sit by myself for a little while to level out?

Linda: No, it's actually good to sit with a group because it will ground you a bit more, especially a group like this where there are a lot of very mature people here, energetically it will help to ground you. Outside of this, things like eating – that will slow it down and regulate it. And often during a retreat you might feel craving for a few things just to slow down the energy in your body. Things like walking can be really good.

Sitting like this, even though you do start to feel the energy, it also grounds it at the same time, so it's doing two things. I used to always like a hot shower at the end of a sitting day because it would soothe my body to a degree, just take the edge off it. Anything that's just going to take the edge off it a bit is good – except for strong drugs. (laughing)

Question: So not another coffee then? ☺

Linda: No, don't have another coffee. I'm not saying stop coffee if you're used to drinking coffee. Particularly during a retreat it's not good to stop taking some sort of drug that you've been taking –

any sort of stimulant or anything – because then you’ll just have a reaction to it and it’ll compound the whole thing. So if you’re going to give something up, give it up a week or two before a retreat, not during a retreat. But a bit of coffee is not going to hurt you. And if it’s something you enjoy, it’s something to look forward to in the breaks.

Question: I came into the retreat in a good place, so my energy was good and I found that I could sit long yesterday morning, and again today. I remember your words from yesterday saying, “Just do whatever it takes.” Sometimes I’ll just move a bit to release the pressure, because I always get this pressing, burning pain where the sitting bones hit the cushion. It usually takes an hour and a half of sitting for it to come but when it comes it’s – I guess like any pain – unbearable. But today it was like “I’m sick of f’ing around – just do it!” So I did sit and didn’t wriggle. Then there was an opening where it just felt a real expansiveness of awareness and it was easy. The day-to-day thoughts just seemed to go away and I could be really present. That was a very pleasant place, and it also deepened my awareness. So when the pain came I was able to stay with it a little more attentively and not be so reactive against it. Then I started to get a tingling on the left side of my skull. I got that yesterday but this morning it was a little stronger, a little more vibrational. It went to a pressure underneath the top of the skull, like a pushing up feeling. It wasn’t painful but it was an, “Oh, this is interesting, what’s happening here?” I’ve never had that before. That was around the time you gave the talk about the counting so my mind was partly listening to you and partly going back to this experience of pressure. And then slowly the pressure just dissolved again.

Linda: The pressure in your head?

Question: Yes, it was interesting. When that pressure was happening it was like the pain in the sitting bones just didn’t count, it was like it wasn’t happening, because my attention was so focused on that upward pressure. Of course when that dissolved it was back down to the pain and it was really burning. I was able to stay with it for a bit longer but when the bell went for the walking it was like, “That’s it – I’m out of here,” and I just changed position.

Linda: Did you get up and do the walking?

Question: No, I changed position in the middle of the walking. I just changed from sitting to kneeling.

Linda: Yes, it wouldn’t have hurt to do the walking then, at that point. Never see the walking as something that’s going to interrupt; it can actually add to the energetic intensity. So, very good, what you said, really good.

Question: Linda, does that pain of the bone on the cushion, does that ever go away?

Linda: Yes.

Question: Does it really?! There’s a part of my mind that says, “Look, if it was a joint or a muscle I can totally understand it. That’s a physiological problem and maybe that could dissipate. But when you get bone on cushion, like this…”

Linda: It goes away, everything goes away. (Linda laughs) It’s like a miracle – it all goes away. You talk about it, and theoretically I can sort of remember what it was, but I can’t remember the

emotional reaction to it. But it's one of the hardest, in every way, because it just feels like concrete. It's a grounding pain – you're being deeply, deeply grounded. And it's necessary, you just have to know it's necessary, it's not there for no reason. Someone's not just mucking around with you, it's there for a reason and it will ground you until you don't need it. Then it will go. But as long as it's there you have to realise you need it, it's necessary.

So keep doing what you're doing. I'd say sometimes, like in that situation, I would have suggested do the walking. But keep doing exactly what you're doing during this retreat. It's only Monday so you've got the rest of the week, and it's a great foundation to start off on. See what happens.

Question: Right. Thank you.

Linda: So don't go looking for anything. Just be open and watch, watch very closely.

Question: I found that talk on the counting helpful because I haven't counted for years and I only started counting when I started sitting with you. I found that really helpful for my grounding and a whole lot of things. But what's coming up for me is not the same as A. but it kind of triggered it. I've had this fear of not being grounded, and it's been coming up, not just on this retreat, but over a period of time. I was really watching it today and in one way I'm grateful for it because it brings me back to the body all the time. But I just thought maybe it's an old memory of being close to death, which I have been a couple of times, and it's clearing itself up.

So this morning I sat there and I thought, "I'm just going to sit with this. I'm going to get close and not be held by it anymore." So I watched and I watched and I got close and I know something definitely wanted it to go away inside me and I kept sitting. And suddenly, while watching my body – my body was quite peaceful, it didn't have any of that – then I shot back in my body and that fear just disappeared. But it comes up again. Is it just an old memory, and is it just coming up? And the other question: you said while we're in the body we have a certain amount of fear left, of being in the body?

Linda: Yes, there's a bit of residual past, a slight bit of residual fear. I'm only talking from my experience and from what I can see. In me I wouldn't say there's none, but over the years since realisation – at that point – I would say there's one percent left. Then it just becomes less and less and less, and probably doesn't disappear until death of the body. But I can't say for sure, I don't know.

Question: That experience I had this morning left me a little bit like, "Wow! What happened here?" Is that just my attachment to the body being triggered from memory?

Linda: Yes, it's all about our attachment to the body – and that's fear. Any attachment you have is based on fear.

Question: So that kind of overwhelming fear of being not grounded is just a memory of fear? Is that what it is?

Linda: Yes. In this situation you're going to be grounded. However much you try not to be, you're going to be grounded. 😊

Question: That's a deep relief. (laughing)

Linda: So don't worry about that.

Question: Okay! Also, I noticed this morning there was a part of me subtly looking for some sort of past high or something like that. As soon as that came the whole universe opened.

Linda: Yes.

Question: It was a really big opening, so it allowed me to enter more deeply today.

Linda: Just take it step by step. Don't look for that high. If you feel a bit bored, that's a mind state. Just don't look for that high. Work on this grounding, this stability. It doesn't sound exciting and all those highs are exciting. It is tempting to look for them and go, "Ah, I'm not feeling that now." But there's something much deeper, much deeper than any sort of amazing experience.

Question: Yes, I really caught myself. Actually, I was liberated. I felt great when it just dropped.

Linda: Yes